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LIBERTY,
AND
EQUALITY,
TWO SERMONS.

By WILLIAM BROMLEY CADOGAN,
RECTOR OF CHELSEA, AND VICAR OF ST. GILES,
READING.

We unto them that call evil good and good evil, &c.

ISAIAH V. 20.

READING:

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MDCCLXXII.

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LIBERTY

AND

EQUALITY



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JOHN viii. 36.

THE SON THEREFORE SHALL MAKE YOU FREE, YE
SHALL BE FREE INDEED.

AFTER all the noise that has been in the world about 'liberty,' no people are 'free,' but they who are made so by JESUS CHRIST.

All but these are slaves and bondmen.

They are free agents, free thinkers, and so forth, above all rule and authority, and power; 'presumptuous and self-willed, they despise government and speak evil of dignities;' and set out with the grand apostacy of 'denying the Lord

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' that

‘ that bought them ;’^a that is renouncing the supremacy and atonement of JESUS CHRIST, who is ‘ the true God and eternal life,’^b and the ‘ one foundation which is laid’^c for the religion and recovery of fallen man.

Mighty philosophers these in their own estimation ! but what are they in the Judgment of Truth ? ‘ they promise liberty, but are themselves the servants of corruption ;’^d they ‘ are in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity ;’^e ‘ in the snare of the devil, by whom they are taken captive at his will ;’^f and doing the work of him, who ‘ was a liar and murderer from the beginning,’^g in destroying themselves, and spreading mischief and misery among their fellow creatures : while God ‘ puts his hook in their nose and his bridle on their lips,’^h that He may restrain their fierceness, and turn it to his praise, making them instruments (‘ though they mean not so’ⁱ) to promote his own counsel.

^a 2 Pet. ii, and Epistle of Jude. ^b 1 John v, 20. ^c 1 Cor. iii, 11.

^d 2 Pet. ii, 19. ^e Acts viii, 23. ^f 2 Tim. ii, 26.

^g John viii, 44. ^h 2 Kings xix, 28. ⁱ Isaiah x, 7.

sel and cause, which stand and prosper amidst all commotions, and which shall endure for ever in the conditions of the righteous and the wicked, of whom it is 'written, these shall go 'into everlasting punishment, but the righteous 'into life eternal.'*

How great then and grievous is the bondage of those, who are the first and foremost in their pretensions to liberty?

This is what our Lord has been telling the Jews in the verses preceding that of the text. He had said 'to those Jews, which believed 'on Him, if ye continue in my word, ye are 'my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the 'truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They were much offended at this, 'and answered Him, we are Abraham's seed, and 'were never in bondage to any man: how 'sayest thou, ye shall be made free? Jesus 'answered them, verily verily I say unto you, 'whosoever committeth sin is the servant of 'sin.' This holds good with regard to Jew

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and

* Mat. xxv, 46.

and Greek, high and low, rich and poor, whatever country they belong to, whatever religion they profess, or whatever opinions they maintain, 'whosoever committeth sin' is a real slave under the worst of masters, he is 'the servant of sin: and the servant abideth not in the house for ever'—he may be bought or sold or dismissed at the will of his master—'the Son abideth for ever'—his right is indisputable and independant, it is by virtue of his condition as 'a Son,' that he is and must be in the house of 'his Father.'

IF THE SON THEREFORE SHALL MAKE
YOU FREE, YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED.

Our subject is christian freedom, what it is in itself, and who it is that confers it.

Christian freedom is deliverance from sin, which is our great enslaver, from the law, which is the strength of sin, and from death, which is the wages of it.

If

If we wish to see true liberty, as it was possessed and enjoyed by our nature, let us read the two first chapters of Genesis, and contemplate man perfect and upright, as God created and made him. Dependent upon his Creator only, and superior to a world produced and provided for his use and benefit, he had nothing withheld from him but a single tree, as the instituted symbol of ‘ that knowledge, which is ‘ too wonderful and high for us,’ and to which, ‘ however we may aspire after it, we can never ‘ attain.’ It is a knowledge, which belongs to God himself, and is part of ‘ that glory, which ‘ He will not give to another.’ Being the Maker of angels and men He is the one Judge of what is ‘ good and evil’ for both, and requires only of both ‘ to be contented with such things ‘ as they have,’ and such as He knows to be convenient for their respective ‘ estates and habitations.” Had man continued in this state, he had been ‘ free indeed,” neither the dupe nor the prey of error or vice, but moving in his

his sphere under the direction and influence of a Being, whose wisdom power and goodness are infinite; and with whom 'is no variableness neither shadow of turning.' But sin found it's way into his heart and enslaved him, puffed him up with idle speculations and high conceits, 'ye shall be as Gods knowing both 'good and evil;'" and reduced him to the condition of a condemned prisoner under sentence of death: in such a condition it retains his posterity, till the 'stronger and the second man, 'who is the Lord from Heaven,' set them free; reigning most over those, who think the least of it's influence, and the best of themselves; it possesses and engages our time and talents, the faculties and exertions of our mind and body.

For the truth of these humbling assertions we appeal not to the lives of the ungodly and profane, of the idle and dissolute, who are openly and avowedly in the habits and under the dominion of sin, but to the examples of the decent and honest, the busy and the prosperous,

perous, of those, who in the emphatical language of the Psalmist, 'do well to themselves, and are praised of all.'* What is it that gives motion to the active and elevation to the eminent, that sets their springs at work, that calls forth the efforts of their genius, and the labour of their hands?—it is sin. What is the God which they worship and serve?—it is self.

* The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself saying, what shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? and he said this will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods: and I will say to my soul,—Soul, thou hast much goods, laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.*

Now what was the evil of this

* Ps. xlix 18.

* Luke xii, 16—21.

this character? It could be no harm to be rich, no harm to be successful, no harm that his estate was productive, no harm to propose to himself ease and cheerfulness, when exempt from the necessity of living by the sweat of his brow; but the evil was that he worshipped and served the 'creature' instead of the 'Creator;' that he laid up treasure to 'himself' and was not rich towards 'God;' and of course when death seized him it proved him to be a fool, 'it took away his gods, and he had nothing left.' There is no character more common than this, they who have the most of this world's goods are often the least thankful to Him, who giveth all things richly to enjoy: they can pass for the best sort of men in the world, and be without God in it too: but however honest, industrious, deserving, amiable and so forth they may be in the sight of men, they are grossly defective in the sight of God, who hath inscribed 'one thing thou lackest' upon every one of them. Measure them by the word of God, and you discover at once the great defect in their character. Propose to them the law of the Most High, which saith,

'thou

' thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all
 ' thy heart, mind, soul and strength, and thy
 ' neighbour as thyself,' and they cannot but
 assent to it with the scribe, and acknowledge,
 ' Well master, thou hast said the truth.'^a But
 bring this truth and their character together,
 examine the one by the other, and the conclu-
 sion must be, that if one is right the other is
 wrong. How then does the law of the Most
 High affect them? It proves them guilty, and
 worketh wrath; it excites in them concu-
 piscence to break it, and enmity against the
 God who gave it, and drives them back to their
 old principles and habits, their old ways of
 thinking and acting, which they oppose to the
 will and word of Jehovah. But go a step
 further, and propose to them the Gospel of the
 ever blessed God, ' the glad tidings of great
 ' joy that there is a SAVIOUR, CHRIST JESUS
 ' the LORD,'^b that He hath ' redeemed us
 ' from the curse of the law, being made a curse
 ' for us;'^c that He is almighty to pardon and
 subdue our iniquities, and that after ' the Priest
 C ' and

^a Mark xii, 32.

^b Luke ii, 10.

^c Gal. iii, 13.

' and Levite have passed by the wounded and
 ' dying traveller,' and left him as they found
 him, in ' his sins and in his blood,' here is the
 good Samaritan with his oil and wine, with his
 spirit and with his blood to heal him, and with
 the word of his grace, saying unto him, ' live.'
 If the ' moral law, which came by Moses,'
 condemns you, and ' the ceremonial law can-
 ' not purge your conscience,' here is ' Grace'
 and ' Truth' by ' JESUS CHRIST' to deliver
 you. * ' Come unto me all ye that are weary
 ' and heavy laden and I will give you rest; take
 ' my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am
 ' meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find
 ' rest unto your souls. For God so loved the
 ' world that He gave his only begotten Son,
 ' that whosoever believeth in Him should not
 ' perish but have everlasting life.'^b Surely here
 is the voice of the charmer, but there is ' a
 ' deaf adder which poisons and stops our ears,
 ' so that they refuse to hear, charm He ever
 so wisely.' It is impossible to receive this Gos-
 pel and retain our possessions. ' Why do the
 ' heathen

* Sec. John, i, 17.

^b Mat. xi, 28. John iii, 16.

‘ heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain
 ‘ thing? The Kings of the earth set them-
 ‘ selves, and the rulers take counsel together
 ‘ against the Lord, and against his Christ.’* It
 seems a common cause in which Kings and
 Gentiles, rulers and people, who are opposed
 to each other on many occasions, are firmly
 united together; and why?—the reason is put
 into their own mouths; ‘ let us break their
 ‘ bands asunder and cast away their cords from
 ‘ us.’ The ‘ bands’ and ‘ cords’ are the things
 which we dislike. The sin, which keeps us in
 bondage, persuades us that we are free, and that
 religion would deprive us of our freedom; that
 we are ‘ rich and increased with goods,’ and
 that religion would take them away. ‘ There
 ‘ came one running, and kneeled to Jesus, and
 ‘ asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do
 ‘ that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus
 ‘ said unto him, why callest thou me good?
 ‘ there is none good but one, that is God. Thou
 ‘ knowest the commandments, do not commit
 ‘ adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not

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‘ bear

' bear false witness, defraud not, honour thy
 ' father and mother. And he said to him, all
 ' these things have I observed from my youth '•
 Now here was a virtuous and valuable man,
 such as attracted the esteem and admiration of
 Jesus; ' then Jesus beholding, loved him.'
 There cannot be a more honourable testimony
 to his character, for the Holy Ghost always
 means what He says, and therefore authorises
 us to infer from this plain expression, that Jesus
 actually loved this amiable young man; and
 ' He said unto him, one thing thou lackest: go
 ' thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give
 ' to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in
 ' heaven: and come, take up thy cross and
 ' follow me. And he was sad at that saying
 ' and went away grieved, for he had great pos-
 ' sessions.' Now what was it that could in-
 duce this man to reject such an offer? the
 offer of ' treasure in heaven,' and of ' Jesus
 ' who loved him' as his Lord and portion! It
 was sin, which shackled, fettered, and blinded
 him. ' If our Gospel be hid,' saith ' St. Paul,
 ' It

' It is hid to them that are lost ; in whom the
 ' God of this world hath blinded the minds of
 ' them that believe not, lest the light of the
 ' glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image
 ' of God, should shine unto them.'* Christian
 freedom is deliverance from this bondage. The
 Truth, which makes us free, is the ministration
 of the ' Spirit' to open the eyes, the ears,
 and the heart ; to remove all things that offend,
 and set the believer at liberty to embrace,
 to follow, and to enjoy what he knows to be
 true. If you will look into the third chapter
 of St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians,
 you will find an account of the Gospel, as it is
 the ' ministration of the SPIRIT,' and as it
 finds its way into the hearts of them that receive
 it: you will find also the bondage and liberty,
 of which we have been speaking, contrasted
 together, and exemplified in the present and
 future destinies of the Jewish people.
 ' The vail over the face of Moses,' when he
 gave them their law, was a sign, that ' they
 ' could not look to the end of that which is
 ' abolished.

'abolished. But their minds were blinded;
 'for until this day remaineth the same vail un-
 'taken away in the reading of the Old Testa-
 'ment; which vail is done away in CHRIST.
 'But even unto this day, when Moses is read,
 'the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless
 'when it shall turn to the Lord the vail shall be
 'taken away. Now the Lord is that SPIRIT,
 'and where the SPIRIT of the Lord is, there
 'is liberty.' Here then is Christian freedom,
 where the Almighty 'Spirit' removes every ob-
 struction, opens and enlarges the heart, gains
 admission for 'the faithful saying, which is
 'worthy of all acceptation,' gives us a sight of
 the Lord's Glory in the mirror of his word,
 and liberty 'to run the way of his command-
 'ments,' which approve themselves to his
 image in the inner man. 'But we all with
 'open face beholding as in a glass the glory of
 'the Lord, are changed into the same image,
 'from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the
 'Lord.' By these operations of the Spirit,
 every one 'that is called in the Lord is the
 ' Lord's

‘ Lord’s freeman,’ and of course ceases to be ‘ servant of men.’^a He has nothing to do with their traditions, rudiments, opinions and fashions, he is above and independent of all, and has only to ‘ understand what the will of ‘ the Lord is’ and to follow it. The poorest disciples of Christ have this freedom, and enjoy it; you may produce your reasons, ridicule, and threats against them, you may bind and imprison them, but still they are free; neither the darkness of midnight, nor the dreariness of a dungeon can prevent the entrance and influence of light and life in their souls; they can rise to prayer and praise, and ‘ mount with ‘ wings as eagles’ in the sublime exercises of faith and devotion; they can rest and expatiate in the presence of God as in their proper element; the Lord is at hand to feed, to help, and to bless them, to work so that none shall let, and to keep them in his hands, so that none shall pluck them out; unshackled and unfettered they run without weariness, and walk with-

^a 1 Cor. vii, 22.

without fainting; they are, in the language of the text, 'free indeed.'

I have dwelt largely upon this topic, conceiving it to be an essential part of true liberty to be free from prejudice, to say, that 'whereas 'I was blind now I see,' and that 'JESUS hath 'opened mine eyes.'^a And what will such light discover? 'the hidden things of darkness, 'the counsels of a heart,' which have been 'only and continually evil,' and the 'law' which is 'spiritual,' but has long been without it's effect through the glosses and 'traditions of 'men.' Being 'renewed in knowledge, after 'the image of Him that created me,' I must assent to the 'law that is holy, just and good,' but having been broken it can only condemn me, and giving to sin it's power to bind and destroy, it is called 'the strength of sin.' Deliverance from this is Christian freedom: 'the 'law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made

^a John ix.

‘ made me free from the law of sin and death.’

A believer is ‘ not under the law, but under
 ‘ Grace,’ and therefore ‘ sin hath not dominion
 ‘ over him,’ it neither fastens him to the earth,
 nor cries against him to heaven. St. Paul in
 the seventh chapter of his Epistle to the Ro-
 mans represents us as allied and subject to the
 law, as a wife is bound to her husband : as
 ‘ long as her husband liveth, she cannot be
 ‘ married to another, but her husband being
 ‘ dead, she is free from that law.’ He illus-
 trates by this similitude the different states of
 men by nature and Grace, of bondage under
 the law, and liberty under the Gospel. ‘ Where-
 ‘ fore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to
 ‘ the law by the body of Christ ; that ye should
 ‘ be married to another, to Him who is raised
 ‘ from the dead, that we should bring forth
 ‘ fruit unto God. For when we were in the
 ‘ flesh, the motions of sins which were by the
 ‘ law did work in our members to bring forth
 ‘ fruit unto death : but now we are delivered
 D ‘ from

‘ from the law, that being dead, wherein we
 ‘ were held’. The apostle proceeds to describe
 the effects of the law where it is known and
 applied by the Spirit with it’s proper force and
 efficacy; ‘ sin abounds by it,’ and ‘ becomes
 ‘ exceeding sinful:’ supposing that there is an
 inclination to obey it while it’s condemning
 power exists, the presence of evil inseparable
 from the propensity to good leaves him only to
 lament, ‘ O wretched man that I am! who
 ‘ shall deliver me from the body of this death?’
 But he rises above the law, and ‘ thanks God
 ‘ through Jesus Christ our Lord:’ and begins
 the next chapter with a plain conclusion drawn
 ‘ from the contents of this, ‘ there is therefore
 ‘ now no condemnation to them that are in
 Christ Jesus.’

What then? Shall we sin because we are
 ‘ not under the law, but under Grace? God
 ‘ forbid.’ As creatures we have great obliga-
 tions to God, as Christians infinitely more, ‘ ye
 ‘ are bought with a price, therefore glorify
 ‘ God in your body, and in your spirit, which
 ‘ are

‘ are God’s.’ If we know CHRIST as a Saviour, we must hate the sins for which He suffered in proportion as we love Him ‘ who bare them in his own body upon the tree,’ and suffered so much upon their account. If ‘ the same mind be in us, which was also in CHRIST JESUS,’ our delight must be, like His, in the law of the Lord, which He ‘ came into the world to fulfil,’ and by which obedience alone, we can be made righteous before God. The language of faithfulness to God is, ‘ O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep thy commandments! O that thy law were so written upon my inward parts that no thought or desire of my heart might wander from Thee! but if this be not the case, as I could wish, shall I therefore despair? shall I suppose that I am not justified from all things, because I am not sanctified wholly? God forbid. Let me learn from my daily wanderings, from the constant presence of evil, from sin dwelling in me, and from it’s law in my members, to doubt, distrust, and abhor myself; but

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God

God forbid, that I should doubt or distrust my
 ‘ Redeemer : ’ no fall can be finally ruinous,
 but departure from Him.

Here is the Christian’s freedom from the law—he consents to it that it is good, he admits it as a rule of life in it’s spiritual application to the inmost recesses of the soul, and aspires after that love which is the fulfilling of it : but though he transgresses it through surprise or infirmity seven times and seventy times seven in a day, he will never acknowledge it’s right as a covenant of works to condemn him ; he is divorced from it, dead to it, and married and alive unto another, even unto Jesus, who is raised unto David as a righteous branch, who hath executed judgment and justice in the earth, who is never seen by his church but as the author of salvation and safety, and who is ever known and invoked by his proper, his glorious name, **JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Christian preaching therefore does not consist in saying, you must be this or do this, but in lifting up **JESUS CHRIST** and saying, ‘ believe on him and thou shalt be saved ; go in peace, thy
 ‘ faith

‘ faith hath made thee whole,’ as sound and safe as the everlasting strength and righteousness, as the faithfulness and fullness of the Godhead can make thee. What a life then of freedom and independence is that, ‘ which is lived in the ‘ flesh by the faith of the Son of God, who ‘ loved me and gave himself for me.’^a It is a life which no law human or divine can find fault or meddle with. ‘ The Lord is my life ‘ and my salvation, whom then shall I fear? ‘ the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom ‘ then shall I be afraid?’^b Who shall lay any ‘ thing to the charge of God’s elect, it is God ‘ that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? ‘ it is CHRIST that died, yea rather that is risen ‘ again, who is even at the right hand of God, ‘ who also maketh intercession for us.”^c ‘ Surely it may be said that ‘ against such there is no law,’ that ‘ their warfare is accomplished,’ that ‘ their iniquity is pardoned,’ and that ‘ they ‘ have received of the Lord’s hand double for ‘ all their sins:’^d that God ‘ hath reconciled ‘ them to himself’ completely and for ever ‘ in

^a Gal. ii. 20. ^b Ps. xxvii. 1. ^c Rom. viii. 33, &c. ^d Is. xl. 2.

‘ in the body of his flesh through death, to present them holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.

‘ To continue in this faith grounded and settled, and not to be moved away from the ‘ hope of the Gospel,’ what is it, but, in the language of the text, to be ‘ free indeed?’

Where sin does not enslave, and the law does not condemn, there death has lost its power. ‘ O death, where is thy sting? O ‘ grave, where is thy victory? the sting of ‘ death is sin; and the strength of sin is the ‘ law. But thanks be to God, which giveth ‘ us the victory through our Lord Jesus ‘ Christ.”* This is the language of perfect freedom, and when the tongue is loosed to use it, and the heart enlarged to enjoy it, they will not be fettered or silenced by pain, disease, infirmity, or the approach of death in any shape or form.

We

* 1. Cor. xv. 55.

We read of those, who ‘ through fear of
 ‘ death are all their life-time subject to bon-
 dage.’—This must be the lot of all who are
 partakers of flesh and blood, and the most that
 they can do is to get rid of this fear for a sea-
 son: the cares riches and pleasures of life
 may suppress the thought of dying, but the
 reality, the awful reality, still remains: and who
 are free from the fear and power of it, but they
 who believe in Jesus? of whom it is written,
 ‘ that forasmuch as the children are partakers
 ‘ of flesh and blood, He also himself took part
 ‘ of the same, that through death he might
 ‘ destroy him that had the power of death, that
 ‘ is the devil, and deliver them who through
 ‘ fear of death were all their life time subject to
 ‘ bondage.’ Who saith of Himself, ‘ I am
 ‘ the Resurrection and the Life, he that be-
 ‘ lieveth in me, though he were dead, yet
 ‘ shall he live, and whosoever liveth and be-
 ‘ lieveth in me shall never die:’ and who saith
 to his disciples, ‘ because I live, ye shall live
 also.’

' also.' This is what the Apostle calls deliver-
 ance from the ' bondage of corruption into the
 ' glorious liberty (or liberty of glory) of the
 ' children of God; for which they, who have
 ' the first fruits of the Spirit, are groaning within
 ' themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit,
 ' the redemption of their body.' * A wonderful
 state of enlargement this ! in which crying and
 sorrow and pain shall be no more, in which we
 shall be like God, incorruptible, immortal,
 glorious, and see Him as He is.

Who but a Christian can cherish such hopes
 as these ? and yet who, but one that has them,
 can pretend to be free ? unless it be freedom to
 ' be reserved in everlasting chains under darkness
 ' to the judgment of the great day, to be bound
 ' hand and foot and cast into outer darkness,
 ' and to be suffering the vengeance of eternal
 ' fire.' † These words may seem to you as idle
 tales, and you may believe them not ; but they
 are the words of the ' Holy Ghost,' to describe
 the miseries of those, who sin against God,
 whether

* Rom. viii. 21, 23. † See Epistle of Jude and Mat. xxii. 13.

whether angels or men; and those of us, ' who
 ' know not God, and obey not the gospel of
 ' our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished
 ' with everlasting destruction from the presence
 ' of the Lord and from the glory of his power.'
 While these shall be in close confinement,
 barred within the iron gates of hell, to come
 out no more, gnashing their teeth and gnawing
 their tongues, blaspheming the God of heaven,
 and never repenting to give Him glory; they
 on the other hand, whose hearts ' the Lord
 ' hath opened that they have attended to the
 ' things which were spoken by Him,' they who
 have ' fled for refuge to Jesus Christ that they
 ' might be justified by the faith of Him, they
 who have been ' delivered from this present evil
 ' world,' and have walked at liberty in the way
 of God's commandments, they shall be ranging
 at large in the bright regions of eternal day,
 they shall be singing hallelujahs to the Lord
 God omnipotent, and rejoicing in Him who
 hath saved them with an everlasting salvation:
 in a word, for ever released from shame and
 E sorrow,

sorrow, and for ever crowned with glory and righteousness, they are 'free indeed.'

Such is Christian freedom, from the service of sin, the curses of the law, and horrors of death: and who is He that confers this freedom upon us? it is the 'Son'—the Son of God and the Son of man.

A wonderful Name this, which is above every name! descriptive of One, who by the union of two natures in Himself is perfect God and perfect man: and who by his office is the head of God's family, 'the first begotten of 'every creature' in it, the one surety and representative of the whole, bringing God to men and men to God, making the offended Majesty of heaven a reconciled Father, and making those, 'who are by nature children of wrath, the 'children of God by the faith of Himself.'

That we may conceive rightly of Him, whose office it is to make his people free, as well as of those who are made so by Him, we must attend to the distinction between a 'Servant and

' a Son :'

‘ a Son :’ and remember that servants in those days were mostly slaves. ‘ The Servant abideth ‘ not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ‘ for ever. If the Son therefore shall make you ‘ free, ye shall be free indeed.” This distinction is most beautifully marked in the very elegant epistle of St. Paul to Philemon ; which was wrote in the behalf of a servant, who had run away from his master : who had perhaps been taken up as a vagrant at Rome, and imprisoned with St. Paul ; who had certainly heard the Apostle and believed him ; and is therefore stiled by him ‘ my son Onesimus, whom I have ‘ begotten in my bonds.’ The Apostle would have retained him with himself as one that had and might have been profitable to him, but he sends him back to his proper master : for the Gospel does not countenance disobedience and rebellion, confusion and disorder ; it does not infringe upon God’s constitution of things, the distinctions of master and servant, of high and of low, of rich and of poor ; distinctions so essential to the good and happiness of this world, that no nation or community ever has subsisted

without them or ever will. ' Let every man,
 ' abide in the same calling wherein he was
 ' called. Art thou called a servant or a slave ?
 ' care not for it : if thou mayest be made free,
 not by violence, but by an act of him who
 hath a right to make thee so, ' use it rather.
 ' For he that is called in the Lord being a ser-
 ' vant is the Lord's free-man : likewise also he
 ' that is called being free is Christ's servant :
 ' being bought with the price of his blood.' *
 With these views the Apostle sends Onesimus to Philemon, beseeching him at the same time to receive him, ' not now as a servant,
 ' but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more to thee,
 ' both in the flesh and in the Lord ?

Hence let us infer the difference between a servant and a son, and the distinction conferred upon those, who receive their freedom from the ' Son of God.' His office may be learnt from his name, it is to make them that love Him ' the sons and daughters of the Almighty,'

no

no less (and they cannot be more) than partakers with Himself. 'For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee; and, again, behold I and the children which God hath given me.' We are by nature servants of the law, which saith, this do and thou shalt live; of sin, having obeyed it, and therefore subject to death: as such, we may be in the house of God for a time, but we cannot be there for ever. We may be in the world, which may be considered as the house of Him that made it, built and fitted by Himself for the reception and residence of man; but we are not here for ever; when we have lived our time, and performed our task, we are dismissed, and heard of no more. We may find our way also into the houses of God upon earth, in which the good and the bad, the wheat and the tares, are gathered and growing together, but when the harvest of the earth shall be fully ripe, and God shall command his angels

'angels to put in their sickles and reap,' when
 He shall appear as the Judge of all men, to dis-
 tinguish 'between the righteous and the wicked,
 'between him that serveth God and him that
 'serveth him not,' then the servant shall be
 discharged from his house, and be neither
 heard nor thought of in heaven. But if the
 Son has made us free, He has taken us into
 union with Himself, admitting us to his table
 in the house and presence of his father, He
 hath given us in that house 'a place and a
 'name better than of sons and of daughters,'
 an 'inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and
 'unfading;' a footing and an establishment, to
 which our title is clear, and which none can
 dispute or destroy. Children may commit
 offences, (and who can tell how oft he offend-
 eth) but it is the Father's office not to turn
 them out, but to bear with them, not to leave
 or forsake, but to reprove, chasten, and cor-
 rect them; they may be ignorant, but it is
 the Father's office to teach and instruct them;
 they may need constant tuition and care, but
 they are 'heirs of God and joint heirs with
 'Christ,'

‘Christ,’ and it is the Father’s office to preserve and prepare them for glory; in a word, they are free of his house, and have a right to say with the Psalmist, ‘one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.’*

‘IF THE SON THEREFORE SHALL MAKE YOU FREE, YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED.’

Men and brethren, is not this liberty far preferable to that, which has the name without the nature of freedom? which serves only as a watch word for the idle and seditious, to inflame your passions, distract your minds, and disturb your peace; to excite in you false alarms of imaginary evils, and foolish conceits of imaginary good; and which, could it do all

* Psalm xxvii, 4. xxiii, 6.

all that it pretends for you in this life, leaves you just where it found you as to all prospects of another; born in sin, children of wrath, prisoners and captives under the law which you have broken, liable to be seized and cast into prison, there to be kept and tormented for ever! If the Bible be true, this is the condition of all the children of Adam, and none are delivered from it, but they 'who believe that 'Jesus is the Christ the son of the living God,'

Hast thou then believed in Jesus? If not, thou art yet in thy sins, if in sins, of course in chains; those chains are the chains of darkness; and, except broken in this life, they are everlasting. Kind and gentle reader, a fellow creature and fellow sinner with myself, 'the Lord Jesus 'forgiveth sins,' and 'looseth the prisoners;' may He shew thee thy want of Him and make thee free!

Is it thy complaint then, 'I am so fast in 'prison that I cannot get forth? O wretched 'man that I am, who shall deliver me from the
'body'

‘ body of this death? Believe in the Lord
 ‘ Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved ; take
 ‘ his yoke upon thee and learn of Him, and
 ‘ thou shalt know the truth, and the truth
 ‘ shall make thee free ;’ ask of Him and He
 ‘ shall send thee a comforter, the Spirit of
 ‘ Truth, and where the Spirit of the Lord is,
 ‘ there is liberty.’

Or is it thy happy lot to have believed in
 Jesus through grace, and so to have obtained
 this freedom? You will not say, as the chief
 captain did to Paul, ‘ with a great sum ob-
 ‘ tained I this freedom,’ for you have it ‘ with-
 ‘ out money and without price ;’ but you may
 say with Paul, ‘ I was free born. Begotten to
 ‘ a lively hope through the Gospel,’ and ‘ born
 ‘ not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible,
 ‘ by the word of God which liveth and abideth
 ‘ for ever, justified freely by his grace through
 ‘ the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, I
 ‘ have access by faith into that grace, in which
 ‘ I stand,’ and rejoice in the hope of the glory
 of God. As a ‘ fellow citizen with the saints

F

‘ and

‘ and of the household of God,’ I look beyond this world and live above it. I confess myself
 ‘ a stranger and pilgrim upon earth, and desire
 ‘ a better country that is a heavenly,’ and I expect glorious liberty and perfect peace in a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

‘ Happy are the people that are in such a
 ‘ case—happy the people whose God is the Lord !’

Let such be addressed in the words of the Apostle, ‘ stand fast therefore in the liberty
 ‘ wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be
 ‘ not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.’^a Fall not from grace, by seeking righteousness from the law, or happiness from a condemned and dying world ; keep your Bible and read it, and shew that you are free to obey and enjoy it, that you are here thoroughly furnished unto all good works, and want no other book to direct your conduct in this life,
 or

^a Gal. v. 1.

or your way to another. That your religion is,
 ' to rejoice in Christ Jesus as in your God and
 ' Saviour, and to have no confidence in the
 ' flesh ; to be subject one to another in love,'
 and to be ' clothed with humility : ' that your
 politics are, to ' pray for Kings and all that
 ' are in authority, that you may lead quiet and
 ' peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty ;
 ' to study to be quiet and mind your own bu-
 ' siness, and to labour, working with your
 ' hands that which is good ; to obey magis-
 ' trates, and be ready to every good work : ' that
 your profession is, to be ' free, and not using
 ' your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but
 ' as the servants of God : ' and that the com-
 mandments which you have received from
 Him, your one Master and Lord, are, ' to ho-
 ' nour all men : to love the brotherhood : to
 ' fear God : and to honour the King.'

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, in-
 visible, the only wise God, Father, Son and
 Holy Ghost, in one Jehovah, be honour and
 glory, for ever and ever. Amen.



EPISTLE to the ROMANS iii. 22, 23, 24.

**FOR THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE. FOR ALL HAVE SINNED,
AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD; BEING JUSTIFIED
FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.**

THE cry of the day is Liberty and Equality; words of excellent import, but liable, like most things that are good in their kind, to abuse and perversion. As to liberty civil and religious, it is truly valuable, and it is enjoyed in it's utmost extent in our country, where law is established to regulate the conduct of those in authority, and to protect the persons, rights and properties of all; and where the
Scripture

Scripture is established to regulate the conduct of religious teachers, so that nothing can be imposed upon us as an article of faith, but what 'is found in Scripture and to be proved 'thereby.'* Change this constitution in church or state, and substitute the passions and fancies of men, instead of the law in the one, and the Bible in the other, and we are a nation of slaves, to be consumed and devoured one of another.

But the liberty, which has been the subject of a former discourse, is of a species far superior to that, which, however excellent in it's kind, and however it has deservedly the name of freedom, extends to this life only, and is of course confined within the narrow circle of 'three score years and ten.' It is 'Christian liberty,' which has employed my pen, and which has never been obtained but only from 'the CHRIST the Son of the living God.' It consists in freedom from sin which enslaves us, from

* See 6th, 20th and 21st Articles of the Church of England.

from the law which condemns us, and from the death which is due to us.

To the same book, where I have searched for 'liberty,' I have had recourse for 'equality' also, and I would fain present it to the reader as I found it. As to the concerns of this life, it is essential to the being and well-being of society, that there should be differences and distinctions in the ranks, orders, and stations of men; they are clearly marked in the Bible, and many of the commandments of God are founded upon them. But as to grand and eternal concerns 'there is no difference;' and if no difference, there is of course equality; and to what may this word be applied without detriment to any, and with profit to all? It may be applied to human nature, it may be applied to divine grace: we are levelled by the one, 'for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;' we are levelled by the other, 'being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.'

First

First of all then, there is no difference between us as creatures; for ‘have we not all
 ‘one Father? Hath not one God created us?’^a
 It is our sin and reproach to be ignorant of
 Him, ‘who is not far from every one of us :
 ‘for in him we live and move and are;’ and
 it is no credit to the wisdom of this world,
 that it could erect nothing at Athens, ‘but an
 ‘altar with this inscription, To THE UN-
 ‘KNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye igno-
 ‘rantly worship,’ saith St. Paul, ‘Him declare
 ‘I unto you. God that made the world and
 ‘all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of
 ‘heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples
 ‘made with hands; neither is worshipped with
 ‘mens’ hands as though He needed any thing,
 ‘seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all
 ‘things; and hath made of one blood all na-
 ‘tions of men for to dwell on all the face of
 the earth.’^b Here then is perfect equality, and
 were it felt as it ought to be, it would unite
 the whole earth in one language and speech,
 ‘O come, let us worship and bow down and
 kneel

^a Malachi ii, 10.^b Acts xvii, 23, &c.

‘kneel before the Lord our Maker. Know ye
 ‘that the Lord He is God, it is He that hath
 ‘made us and not we ourselves; we are his
 ‘people and the sheep of his pasture.’^a

Secondly, if there be no difference between
 us as creatures, there can be no difference as to
 the laws under which we were created, and to
 which we all owe equal obedience, whether
 we chuse to pay it or no. ‘Thou shalt love
 ‘the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and
 ‘with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and
 ‘with all thy strength. This is the first and
 ‘great commandment. And the second is
 ‘like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neigh-
 ‘bour as thyself.’^b Who can claim exemption
 from these commandments? Who can deny
 their reasonableness, and tendency to secure
 the honour of God and happiness of men?
 The preservation of these laws in our hearts
 and lives would have prevented the necessity
 of enacting others, of all which we may say,

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as

^a Psalms xcvi and c.

^b Mark xii, 30.

as it has been said of the law of Moses, that
 ‘they were added because of transgression;’ in
 consequence of the many vices, corruptions,
 and enormities, which have defiled men, and
 disturbed the world, and which have all ori-
 ginated in the one breach of the first and one
 law of nature.

Thirdly then, if there be no difference be-
 tween us as we are creatures, and as we are all
 subject to the same law, and if it can be proved
 that we have all broken that law, it will fol-
 low that there can be no difference in another
 respect, and that it is the humbling equality
 which is spoken of in the words of the text—
 ‘for all have sinned and come short of the
 ‘glory of God.’ The Apostle concludes this
 from fact and from Scripture: he appeals to
 the conduct of Jew and Gentile, and examines
 it by the evidences which each had of God,
 the one from the works of his hands, and the
 other from the words of his mouth; and
 ‘proves

‘ proves or charges both, that they are all
 ‘ under sin.’* He then refers them to Scrip-
 ture, ‘ as it is written,’ and after producing
 many passages from thence, declaring God’s
 judgments of men, he adds, ‘ now we know
 ‘ that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith
 ‘ unto them that are under the law, that every
 ‘ mouth may be stopped, and all the world
 ‘ become guilty before God. Therefore by
 ‘ the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified
 ‘ in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge
 ‘ of sin.’ He then speaks of ‘ the righteousness
 ‘ of God,’ not by our performance, but ‘ by
 ‘ the faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon
 ‘ all them that believe. For there is no differ-
 ‘ ence, for all have sinned and come short of
 ‘ the glory of God:’ and of course must be
 made righteous by faith, or remain sinners for
 ever.

It is easy by the light of God (though not
 by any other means) to trace the seeds of ini-
 G 2 quity,

* Rom. iii, 9.]

quity, 'original or birth sin,' in every man and woman born unto the world: their circumstances and habits, their inclinations and tempers may be as different as their faces, but their heart, their nature, is one and the same. 'For how many might, says Dr. South, 'and without doubt would have stolen, as Achan did, had the the same allurements been played before them? How many might have committed David's murder and adultery, had they been under David's circumstances? How many might have denied and forsworn Christ with St. Peter, had they been surpris'd with the same danger? How great a part of the innocence of the world is nothing else but want of opportunity to do the wickedness they have a mind to? And how many forbear sinning not because God's Grace has wrought upon their wills, but because a merciful Providence has kept off the occasion?'

These

* See first Discourse upon Temptation in Dr. South's Sermons, vol. 6, p. 144. edit. 1737.

These very judicious remarks may have much severity, but they have no injustice, they are founded upon the clear decisions of the infallible God, ‘ who hath looked down from heaven
‘ upon the children of men, and declared that
‘ they are all gone aside, that they are altogether
‘ become filthy, that there is none that doeth
‘ good, no not one; ’ and that except a man be
‘ born again he can not see the kingdom of
‘ God.’^a Here are no distinctions or exceptions whatever, the whole world appears, as it is,
‘ lying in wickedness,’ and the earth, ‘ defiled
‘ with the inhabitants thereof,’ no better than
a common prison, in which ‘ the Scripture,
‘ hath concluded or shut up all under sin,’^c
without any difference or inequality.

And if these things are so, there is no difference in a fourth respect, in as much as it ‘ is
‘ appointed for all men once to die.’ The
Apostle accounts for this by saying, ‘ that sin
‘ hath entered into the world and death by sin,
‘ and

^a Psalm xiv, 3.

^b John iii. 3.

^c Gal. iii 22.

• and death hath passed upon all men, for that
 • all have sinned, and that in Adam all die.*

The worst parts of death are those which are hidden from the sight and thought of the mere natural man; such as the death of his spirit, when God's spirit is taken away, and the destruction of the whole spirit soul and body in 'the lake of fire,' which is called 'the second death,' as it follows the death and resurrection of the body. Whether the torments of hell are equal in nature or degree, is what I neither wish to know, nor pretend to determine; sure I am (for it is written) that they are equal in point of duration; and as to distinctions in misery, it is no more worth while to dispute about them here, than it will be to contend for them hereafter.

Equality however, that humbling word, is strictly applicable to that death which presents itself to us every day, and which is known to be the appointed end of our present existence.

Here

* Rom. v. 12. 1. Cor. xv. 22.

Here all are upon a level.—‘ We see that wise
‘ men die as well as the ignorant and foolish. —
‘ I said ye are gods,’ distinguished now for
power and pre-eminence, ‘ but ye shall die like
‘ men.’ There is no difference in a corpse,
whether it has lived in a cottage or sat upon a
throne; but a vast difference in the states of
departed souls according to the deeds done in
the body. ‘ The only way,’ says an excellent
writer, ‘ to form a true judgment of any man’s
‘ condition taken altogether, is to think upon
‘ him a little when he is laid in his grave.
‘ While he is alive we are cheated with a false
‘ opinion of him : our eyes are smitten with
‘ the splendor of his greatness, or our pride
‘ disgusted by the poverty of his appearance.
‘ But in death there is an end of all delusion.’
Here all men are equal—‘ like sheep they are
‘ laid in the grave, death is feeding on them’—
they are proved to be miserable mortals ‘ who
‘ have come up, and are cut down, like a
‘ flower—their days a shadow—and none
‘ abiding.

* See Reflexions on the life, death, and burial of the Patri-
archs, by the Rev. William Jones, p. 18.

‘ abiding. There is no difference—it is appointed for all men once to die.’^a

‘ But after this the judgment!’ and here we are all upon a footing again. Partakers of the same nature, subject to the same law, summoned before the same tribunal, and the same Judge of all the earth, who knows what He has given to every creature upon it, and who will require of each according as He hath given. Here there can be ‘ no respect of persons,’ no confusion of right and wrong. ‘ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad.’^b Here there will be no distinctions, but between good and evil; all ‘ that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.’^c

^a Ps. xlix. 14. Job xiv. 2. 1 Chron. xxix. 15. Heb. ix. 27.

^b 2 Cor. v. 10.

‘ resurrection of damnation.’^a Could we exclude for a while the things which are ‘ seen and ‘ temporal,’ and banish ourselves with St John to the island of Patmos, with nothing before us but the things which are ‘ not seen and ‘ eternal;’ the same objects might present themselves to us, which were presented to him. ‘ And I saw the dead, small and great, stand ‘ before God; and the books were opened: ‘ and another book was opened, which is the ‘ book of life: and the dead were judged out ‘ of those things, which were written in the ‘ books, according to their works. And the ‘ sea gave up the dead which were in it; and ‘ death and hell delivered up the dead which ‘ were in them: and they were judged every ‘ man according to their works. And death ‘ and hell were cast into the lake of fire: this ‘ is the second death. And whatsoever was ‘ not found written in the book of life, was cast ‘ into the lake of fire.’^b

H

Such

^a John v. 29.^b Rev. xx. 12.

Such is the boasted equality of man! The junction of which with the rights of man is truly surprizing : a strange attempt to connect words, which confute each other ; and by sound without sense to blow up a flame, in which all things are confounded and dissolved together. That a creature, made by the word of his Creator, has a right to live, is undoubtedly true, but this right is received, and depends upon the will of Him that gave it. ‘Thou takest away their breath, they die.’* That a creature, who is to live upon earth, has a right to eat what is produced in it for his support, is equally true ; but this right depends upon his labour, and continuance in that station of life, in which it hath pleased God to call him. ‘For even when we were with you this
 ‘we commanded you, that if any would not
 ‘work, neither should he eat. For we hear
 ‘that there are some that walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies. Now them that are such we command
 ‘and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that
 ‘with

* Psalm civ. 29.

‘with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.’^a We have such rights as creatures; but as sinful creatures, we have none from the law, but to the pains and penalties annexed to the breach of it, and as guilty before God, none from Him, but ‘to his indignation and wrath,’ and to ‘destruction from his presence and the glory of his power.’ In our claims to these rights there is little or no difference at all.

But if the word ‘equality’ may be applied to the human nature, it may also be applied to divine grace: to which all Christians are alike indebted, ‘being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.’

‘Christianity,’ says an able and pious writer, ‘is an act of grace, signed with the royal signet of heaven, to set the condemned prisoner free.’^b

H 2

The

^a 2 Theff. iii, 10, 11, 12.

^b Dr. Horne, late Bishop of Norwich.

The gospel, which proclaims this grace, brings down and levels with the dust all sorts and conditions of men : it teaches the wise, the mighty, the noble (if any such are called) to share it's blessings in common with the poor; whose privilege it is to ' be evangelized,'^a and ' chosen rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, ' which God hath promised to them that love ' him.'

' Let the brother of low degree rejoice in ' that he is exalted : but the rich in that he is ' made low.'

' The faithful word is, that Jesus Christ ' came into the world to save sinners.' What effect had this word upon St. Paul? It ranked him among sinners, and constrained him to add, ' of whom I am the chief.'^c He is less than the least in his own eyes; but, he adds, ' by the grace of God, I am what I am.'^d It is

^a I have retained the original word *ευαγγελίζονται*, which we render ' have the Gospel preached to them.'

^b James i, 9, 10. ^c 1 Tim. i. ^d 1 Cor. xv, 9, 10.

is by free sovereign grace, that I who was before a 'blasphemer, persecutor,' and 'injurious,' am now a Christian, an Apostle, a Martyr.

To testify the Gospel of this grace of God became the one object of his life and labours; and speaking of the partakers of this grace, he describes them as once 'dead in trespasses and sins. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with CHRIST. By grace ye are saved.' Of this grace all Christians feel the need and enjoyment without difference

or

or inequality : and by this we are said in the text to be ‘ justified freely.’

To be justified is to be made righteous, and as the term is applied to those, who are not righteous in themselves, it must signify to be absolved from iniquities ; to be, as the Latins say, ‘ rectus in Curiâ, upright in Court ;’ tried, acquitted, and found righteous at the Bar of God. They who can boast of this righteousness have nothing to fear and every thing to hope : they are the blessed of the Lord. ‘ Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.’ The Apostle tells us, ‘ that David is here describing the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.’ Here then all Christians are equal, being justified by the same grace, and being partakers of the same righteousness of God, which is by the faith
‘ of

• Psalm xxxii, 1, 2. • Rom. iv, 6, 7.

of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all
 them that believe: for there is no difference.
 He puts this argument into the mouth of Titus,
 when he charges him to put his hearers in mind
 to speak evil of no man. For we ourselves
 also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, de-
 ceived, &c. but after that the kindness and
 love of God our Saviour toward man ap-
 peared, not by works of righteousness which
 we have done, but according to his mercy, He
 saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and
 renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed
 on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our
 Saviour: that being justified by his grace we
 might be made heirs according to the hope of
 eternal life.* No words can be plainer than
 these: they describe us as equal in guilt by na-
 ture, and equal in righteousness by grace: and
 that through the redemption which is in
 Christ Jesus.

Redemption is the deliverance of criminals
 and captives by paying the price of their ran-
 som.

* Tit. iii. 2.—7.

form. In the Jewish œconomy, where all things were just and equal, as it was the inspired copy of a divine original, and the figure for a time of the everlasting kingdom of JESUS CHRIST, the law of redemption was established, and the right of it fixed in the person of the nearest kinsman to such as needed it. If a man, for instance, died childless, it was his brother's office to marry his widow, in order to protect her and preserve his family. Upon this law Boaz took Ruth to his bed, and so became the ancestor of David, ' of whose seed, according to promise, God raised unto Israel a Saviour Jesus. If a man had been injured in his person, property, or character, if he had lost his life by violence, or sold his paternal estate through poverty, it was the office of the near kinsman to avenge his wrongs, to pursue his murderers, to redeem his inheritance, and to stand forth in cause of justice and of mercy. ^a

Such an institution, wise and politic in itself, points especially to CHRIST JESUS, in whom

is

^a See Levit. xxv, and Numb. xxxix.

is the right and power of redemption. Allied to the church as her 'husband, bone of our 'bone,' and 'flesh of our flesh, in 'the form 'of a servant and in the likeness of men' He undertakes our cause.—We have been wronged by Satan, having been seduced by him as a liar, having been slain by him as a murderer,—we 'have sold ourselves for nought,' and bartered away our inheritance in the first Adam, for sin and folly—and so we are become poor indeed. But CHRIST makes our condition his own, He 'takes upon him the seed of Abraham,' and while he gives to God the honour due unto his name, and to his law that obedience which establishes it for ever, He 'redeems us from 'death,' He 'ransoms us from the power of 'the grave,' He destroys the works of the devil,' He 'restores our souls,' ruined by the fall, and raises us to the condition and inheritance of the Sons and Daughters of the Almighty.

Behold these children of God, 'which were 'scattered abroad, gathered together in one,

I

and

and ask them, to what they ascribe their perfect recovery in mind, body, and estate, their joy, righteousness, and glory, in the presence and at the right hand of God? and with their eyes fixed upon Jesus, they break forth into one burst of applause,—‘Thou wast slain and hast
 ‘redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every
 ‘kindred and tongue and people and nation.’ They are ‘saying with a loud voice, worthy is
 ‘the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power,
 ‘and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and
 ‘honour, and glory, and blessing.’^a Here is no difference either of state or opinion, no pretence to superiority one over another, no mention of any works or righteousness of their own; but of the blood and worth of Jesus, to which their claim and their debt are equal, they sing and boast for ever.

Whether there be different degrees of glory, is a matter, which I have no curiosity to know, nor have I any encouragement or authority from
 Scripture

^a Rev. v. 9, 12.

Scripture, to discuss or determine. Sure I am, that if there be any difference, it can not arise from any difference of merit in the heirs of glory; they are all equal in this respect, having no righteousness of their own, and all righteousness in their common Redeemer. — They have had ‘one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism,’^a and are now fully possessed of ‘one common Salvation.’ — They are saying, ‘blessing and honour and glory and power to him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.’ And if they should be asked, who is He that sitteth upon the throne? they will answer, that they have ‘been baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,’^b and ‘that which they have believed of the glory of the Father, the same they have believed of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,’^c without any difference or inequality.

I 2

The

^a Ephes. iv. 4. ^b Mat. xxviii. 19. ^c Communion service of the Church of England.

The word 'equality' then may be applied to 'the Three that bear record in heaven, the 'FATHER, the WORD and the HOLY GHOST; 'for these Three are One.'^a It may be applied to the human race produced according to his counsel, 'let us make man.'^b And it may be applied to 'the nations of them that are 'saved,' to all which 'the thrice HOLY,' who appeared in vision to Isaiah, and said, 'whom 'shall I send, and who will go for us?' 'hath spoken and said, 'look unto Me and be ye 'saved all the ends of the earth, for I am God 'and there is none else.'^c But has this any thing to do with the temporal estates and conditions, the civil qualities and distinctions of men? Surely not. The very same book, in which it is written, that there is no difference in the former respects, expressly teaches us the many differences that there are in the latter,

In the very same verse, in which God is said to have 'made of one blood all nations of 'men to dwell on all the face of the earth,'
' He

^a 1 John v. ^b Gen. i. ^c Isaiah vi, 3, 8. ^d Isaiah xlv. 21, 22.

He is said to have ‘determined the bounds of
 ‘their habitation.’^a And that, with reference
 to a most striking passage in the book of Deute-
 ronomy,^b where God is described as the ‘Most
 ‘HIGH,’ ruling in the kingdoms and persons
 of men, and acting with a design to distinguish
 his own people from the rest of mankind.
 ‘When the Most HIGH divided to the na-
 ‘tions their inheritance, when He separated the
 ‘sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the peo-
 ‘ple according to the number of the children
 ‘of Israel; for the Lord’s portion is his people.’
 Well may the Apostle say to a Christian, and it
 may be said to every creature, ‘who made
 ‘thee to differ from another? and what hast
 ‘thou, which thou didst not receive?’^c Shall
 ‘the thing formed say to Him that formed
 ‘it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not
 ‘the potter power over the clay of the same
 ‘lump to make one vessel unto honour, and
 ‘another to dishonour?’^d So that we may be
 of the same lump, but of different construction;
 ‘made

^a Acts xvii, 26. ^b xxxii, 8. ^c 1 Cor. iv, 7. ^d Rom. ix. 20, 21.

made of the same materials, and for very different purposes also.

‘The rich and poor meet together,’ says the wise man, ‘the LORD is the maker of them all.’^a And the wisdom of God declares in the same book, ‘By me Kings reign and Princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, all the judges of the earth.’ This is the wisdom, which is described in the eighth chapter of Proverbs, as existing with God from everlasting, as present with Him in the beginning, and acting in the formation of all things. What can this be ‘but CHRIST the wisdom of God?’^b the ‘WORD,’ whose glories are set forth in the first chapter of the Gospel by St. John?

The commandment, which God has given, ‘not to covet,’ is a proof, that He withholds from one what he bestows upon another; if this be not a fact, the commandment is without a reason. The charges which He has given

^a Prov. xxii. 2.

^b 1 Cor. i, 24.

‘ to them who are rich in this world, to do
 ‘ good, to be rich in good works, ready to
 ‘ distribute and willing to communicate, ‘ to
 ‘ consider the poor and needy, and give alms
 ‘ of such things as they have,’ &c. &c. do not
 imply, that He, ‘ whose mercy is over all his
 ‘ works,’ means to make all men equal, but
 rather to preserve that useful inequality, by
 which men are enabled to live for the help and
 support of each other. ‘ The profit of the
 ‘ earth is for all: the King is served by the
 ‘ field.’^b If he cannot plough, he can pay;
 and he may relieve those by his bounty, to
 whom he is indebted for their labour.

When John the Baptist appeared in the wil-
 derness of Judea, all sorts and descriptions of
 men came to be taught and baptized by him;
 ‘ the people, the publicans, the soldiers : ‘ they
 ‘ asked him, saying, what shall we do?’ and
 they were directed, not to desert their stations
 and callings, but to shun the vices which were
 peculiar to each, as well as to perform the du-
 ties

^a See 1 Tim. vi. 7 & al. ^b Eccles. v. 9. ^c See Luke iii. 10, &c.

ties which belonged to them. When his 'LORD' and 'MASTER' appeared in the world, He made no alteration in the outward states and conditions of men: He was poor himself, and associated with them that were so; but He rendered 'tribute, custom, and honour,' to whom they were respectively due. When a nobleman came to him in the behalf of his son, and the Centurion in the behalf of his servant, He blamed neither for their rank in life, nor the latter for saying, 'that he had soldiers and servants under him, and could say to one go and to another come;' but commended him rather for the conclusion which he drew from his own authority in favour of the power of 'JESUS,' and said, I have 'not found so great faith, no not in Israel.'^a His express words are, 'to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's:'^b and indeed, if Kings and Queens are to be abolished, according to the levelling plan of this day's philosophy, the Lord must lose one of his titles, which is 'King of Kings,' and the Church one of her promises,

^a John iv. 46. Mat. viii. 8, 9. 10.

^b Mat. xxii. 21.

mises, ' that Kings shall be her nursing fathers
' and Queens her nursing mothers.' ^a Let it
be remembered also, that God ' saith of Cyrus,
' he is my shepherd,' ^b and employs ' heathen
' princes' as the protectors of ' his chosen
' people.'

In the establishment of that kingdom, which
shall stand for ever, the King of it is repre-
sented ' as a man travelling into a far country,
' who called his own servants and delivered to
' them his goods: to one five talents, to ano-
' ther two, and to another one.' ^c And that ac-
cording to the receipt of each, he expected an
account on his return. Surely he that has one
talent is not equal to him that has two nor he
that has two to him that has five. And yet
this is God's disposition of things. To aim
therefore at equality in this life is to oppose
God, to make all men useless, and to throw
all things into confusion.

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^a Isaiah xlix, 23. ^b Isaiah xliv. 28. ^c Mat. xxv. 14.

The Apostles, as they were inspired by the Spirit, so have they trod in the steps of their Master: and have left such ample testimonies in their writings, in favour of order and peace, of contentment and submission to the will of God, of obedience and subjection to the ' powers on earth as ordained of God,' that it is impossible to mistake their meaning, nay it is impossible to give them any meaning, if all men are equal, that is, if Kings are not to rule, and Christians are not to obey them.

It is absurd to suppose, that the institution of Kings was peculiar to the Gentile world, and unknown to the people of God. ' Melchisedec was King of Salem,'^a to whom the patriarch ' Abraham gave the tenth of his spoils.' When the seed of Abraham are presented to ' Balaam in the plains of Moab, the Lord his ' God is with him, and the shout of a King is ' among them.'^b Moses commanded them a ' law, and he was King in Jethurun, when the ' heads

^a Gen. xiv, 18, &c.

^b Numb. xxiii, 21.

‘ heads of the people, the tribes of Israel were
‘ gathered together.’^a He was succeeded in
place and power by Joshua, with whom God
engaged to be as He had been with Moses, and
to whom the people engaged to be as obedient
as they had been to his predecessor. After the
death of Joshua they fell under the govern-
ment of judges : but little is recorded to their
credit during this period of their history. The
treatment of the ‘ Levite’s concubine’ is marked
‘ as such a deed as had not been done nor seen
‘ from the day that the children of Israel came
‘ up out of Egypt, unto that day.’^b This was
preceded by the thefts, ravages, and idolatries
of Micah and the Danites, and followed by the
slaughter of forty thousand Israelites, and then
all the Benjamites, except six hundred, who
had been the first aggressors, and in the first
outset conquerors also. And all is said to have
happened when ‘ there was no King in Israel,
‘ and every man did that which was right in
‘ their own eyes.’ Which words are four
K 2 times

^a Deut. xxxiii, 5.

^b Judges xix, 30.

times repeated, * as expressing the cause of the irregularities and enormities, which prevailed amongst them.

When Samuel was raised up among them, and 'established a prophet of the Lord,' he re-proves them, it is true, 'for their wickedness 'in asking themselves a King.'^b But this wickedness was not a desire to be governed, (few people are guilty of that) but resisting the government of God: they were 'murmurers and 'complainers,' and preferred a King of their own chusing to Samuel, whom the Lord had appointed to 'rule over and admonish them.' Saul is given to them by 'the Lord in his anger, and taken away in his wrath.' But David is called, 'as a man after God's own heart,' to be King of Israel; in whose reign, and in that of his son Solomon, (a Monarch as great and absolute as ever swayed a sceptre) the Jews attained the summit of their wealth and splendor.

They

* Judges xvii, 6. xviii, 1. xix, 1. xxi, 25.

^b Sam. xii, 17.

They continued under the government of Kings, as long as they continued a people: till after having been invaded by the first, and subjected to the three successive empires of the world, they filled up the measure of their iniquities in crucifying their KING, JESUS CHRIST. Soon after which their city and temple were destroyed, all distinctions levelled, and themselves dispersed into every nation under heaven, to remain as monuments of the fierceness and wrath of ALMIGHTY GOD.

What has happened to the 'Jews' has happened to the 'Grecks' also. Travel through the deserts of Asia Minor, where the wisdom of this world flourished, and, what is more, where the wisdom of God was taught by his Apostles, and you may trace perhaps here and there the ruins of a Doric or Corinthian column, but the 'Attic' as well as 'Christian' salt hath lost it's favour.' Athens itself is but a parcel of huts, inhabited by a rude and barbarous people, unacquainted with the common arts of admitting the light and excluding the

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the air. Among their heathen ancestors were the emulations of genius, valour, and industry, among their Christian the better emulation to 'excel for the edifying of the church.' Among the present race there is 'equality'—and there can be nothing else,

The attempts of a state therefore to equalize it's members are the sure prognostics of it's ruin, signs, that it has seen it's day, has forsaken it's God, and is left by Him, to perish in it's iniquities.

Neither are we to imagine that in the Church, as it exists upon earth, all the members are equal. The Apostle 'tells us that there are 'diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and diversities of operations, but the same God which worketh all in all.' He compares the Christian to the natural body; which is one, and hath many members, and to each it's particular office and station assigned.* Displace these members, and they cease to be useful,

* See 1. Cor. xii.

useful, or reduce them to one, the whole body to an ear or an eye, and you reform an organized and well tempered body, into a mass of inert and shapeless matter.

From such 'rights of man' to mend the works of God, such 'liberty and equality,' good Lord deliver us!

And now, to conclude the whole, should these pages fall into the hands of the rich, the mighty, the noble of this world, ye will acknowledge, I hope, that however they may 'bring strange things to your ears,' they offer no affront to your persons: they render all that is due to your rank and pre-eminence among men: and if they did not, they would not speak as the oracles of God. Long may ye have these things and enjoy them! But it is not the design of a sermon to flatter or deceive you, to raise you above the level of creatures, who must give an account of yourselves unto God, who have his law, his gospel, his judgment before you, and who are taught, that 'to whomsoever
much

‘ much is given of him much will be required. ’
 Can any circumstances whatever make a ‘ difference,’ where the Scriptures have said ‘ there
 ‘ is none?’ ‘ FOR ALL HAVE SINNED AND COME
 ‘ SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD; BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH
 ‘ THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.’

‘ Beware then, lest God take thee away with
 ‘ a stroke, and then a great ransom cannot
 ‘ deliver thee, will he esteem thy riches?
 ‘ no—not gold, nor all the forces of thy strength. ’
 ‘ Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring
 ‘ forth your strong reasons, saith the God of
 ‘ Jacob;’ ‘ but who of you can answer or avoid
 the question, ‘ what shall a man be profited if
 ‘ he shall gain the whole world, and lose his
 ‘ own soul?’ ‘ Can any birth exempt thee from
 the necessity of ‘ being born again?’ Can any
 situation raise thee above God’s command-
 ment, ‘ REMEMBER THE SABBETH DAY TO
 ‘ KEEP

‘ Luke xii. 48.

‘ Job xxxvi. 18, 19.

‘ Isaiah xli. 21.

‘ Mat. xvi. 26.

‘KEEP IT HOLY?’ Or is any person respected in the commission of Jesus? ‘go ye forth into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.’

‘Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, if his wrath be kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him.’

Again, whoever thou art that readest these pages, do them the justice to acknowledge that it is not their design to disturb or dissatisfy you about temporal things, or to dissuade you from doing your duty or seeking happiness in that station of life, in the which it hath pleased God to call you: the very reverse is their aim, to convince you that usefulness and success are to

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be fought and found in, no other station. But the great truths which they would inculcate upon thee are, that thou art a sinner by nature, that thou canst be justified only by Grace, and that none but JESUS can save thee.

As to the poor, if you are christians, of what can you complain? ‘Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?’^a Hath He not delivered you from a great hardship? ‘how hardly do they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?’ Hath he not sanctified your state, ‘by himself becoming ‘poor,’ and accomplishing ‘through his poverty,’ what no riches of this world, nor even the riches of his Godhead, could have done without it?’ Rejoice then in your conformity to ‘CHRIST JESUS,’ and in the ‘gospel which is preached to you.’ Look for mercy to Him, ‘who remembered us in our ‘low estate,’ and ‘hath redeemed us from our ‘enemies;

^a James ii. v.

^b Mark x. 23.

‘ enemies ; who raiseth up the poor out of the
 ‘ dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dung-
 ‘ hill ; that He may set him with princes, even
 ‘ with the princes of his people.’^a

Lastly, as to all Christian readers, think,
 ‘ that ye are fellow citizens with the saints and
 ‘ of the household of God,’ and then all dis-
 tinctions of this life will appear beneath you :
 in the assemblies of the saints, at least, let them
 be forgotten. ‘ Have not the faith of our
 ‘ Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory, with re-
 ‘ spect of persons,’ look deeper than to the
 ‘ gold ring and goodly apparel’ of one wor-
 shipper, or than to ‘ the vile raiment of another.’^b
 ‘ Receive ye one another, as Christ hath re-
 ‘ ceived us, to the glory of God.’ Salute one
 another with ‘ brotherly kindness,’ and ‘ walk
 ‘ together in love. Let the potsherd strive
 ‘ with the potsherds of the earth,’^c but
 let ‘ our fellowship be with the Father, and
 ‘ with his Son Jesus Christ. Let us renounce
 ‘ the

^a 2 Cor. viii. 9. Psalm cxxxvi. 23, 24. cxiii. 7, 8.

^b James ii. 1, 2, 3. ^c Isaiah xlv. 9.

‘ the hidden things of darkness,’ the din of politics, and the noise of folly, and let us ‘ dwell in ‘ the light, as God is in the light,’ that ‘ we may ‘ have fellowship one with another in a peace-
 ‘ able habitation, in sure dwellings, and in ‘ quiet resting places.’ And that, instead of being ‘ consumed in the iniquities’ of the world, we may have it to say, that ‘ the ‘ blood of JESUS CHRIST, the SON of GOD, ‘ hath cleansed us from all sin.’ ”

To Him with the Father and the Holy Ghost, three persons in one Jehovah, be equal and everlasting praise. Amen.

* 1 John i.

F I N I S.

Eratum. P. 41. L. 9.—For *chuse* read *choofe*:



